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ABSTRACT

Concern over the shortage of K-12 licensed school counselors prompted Minnesota state lawmakers to undertake a study to determine the current status of their licensed school counselors. The Counselor Assessment Study was conducted to gather information on four issues: (1) the recommended counselor to student ratios and the costs of meeting these ratios; (2) the alternative strategies for collaboration to provide counseling services to pupils; (3) the mechanisms to strengthen collaboration between school districts and local colleges in providing information and experiences to pupils; and (4) suggestions for meeting the needs of pupils for counseling that focus on academic and career planning. The greatest concern voiced by school counselors was the need to lower the student/counselor ratio. Also, most counselors reported that they do not have a job description, and tasks assigned to them are often non-counseling related. One recommendation that came from the study was to have students develop a career plan early in the elementary grades that it can be expanded upon during the secondary school years. Counselors also recommended that schools utilize the development of technology to support and strengthen programs. Additional support staff to perform routine scheduling and data collection is imperative for effective use of counselors' time. (Contains 12 figures; 3 tables; and 6 appendixes.) (JDM)

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Counselor Assessment

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This report required the collection of information which the Department of Children, Families & Learning does not collect as part of its normal business functions. It was therefore necessary to gather and analyze information in order to prepare this report. Therefore, the cost of preparing this reports includes estimates of the Department of Children, Families & Learning information collection costs as well as the estimated costs of the providers of information.

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Executive Summary
Counselor Assessment

The purpose of the Counselor Assessment Study was to gather information on the following four issues:

- *Recommend ratios and the costs of meeting these*

  The national recommendations on ratios of counselors to students (1:250 at all levels).

  It is recommended that a study be done in each district to ascertain the needs of the individual district looking at what currently exists within the schools, external agencies which provide career, and social and personal counseling, and electronic technology which can focus on career counseling.

- *Alternative strategies for collaboration to provide counseling services to pupils especially in small districts*

  It is recommended that partnerships involving community resources (e.g., Workforce Centers for career and job-related information, many community-based organizations, local health clinics, and non-profits) are included in the overall plan for counseling services.

- *Mechanisms to strengthen collaboration between school districts and local colleges and universities in providing information and experience to pupils*

  It is recommended that schools need to provide the collaborative efforts to provide excellent services to students. The role of the school would be to hold regular meetings with all the collaborative partners, to share information, and use a referral method of meeting students needs.

- *Suggestions for meeting the needs of pupils for counseling that are focused on academic and career needs and planning*

  It is recommended that schools utilize the developed technology (ISEEK- Minnesota Internet System for Education and Employment Knowledge, MCIS – Minnesota Career Information Systems, etc.) to support and strengthen the career aspect of the counseling programs.

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Chapter 1

Minnesota School Counseling History

All students growing up in Minnesota today face the normal challenges of growing up and coping with the everyday problems associated with life. In addition, the fast paced changes in societal norms create confusion for young people. Added to this are children who have been abused or neglected, who are frustrated with the cycle of personal and academic failure, who have a disability that requires special support and attention, who are substance abusers, who engage in sexual activity, who feel worthless and those who are homeless. Some behavioral trends for Minnesota youth as reported in The Minnesota Student Survey for 1998 deserve our attention:

Category	Grade Level	% reporting
Any cigarette use in past 30 days	Grade 12	41.7
	Grade 9	30.4
	Grade 6	7.4
Any alcohol use in past 12 months	Grade 12	69.8
	Grade 9	54.0
	Grade 6	19.7
Any marijuana use in past 12 months	Grade 12	30.3
	Grade 9	24.1
	Grade 6	4.1
Ever had sexual intercourse--females	Grade 12	51
	Grade 9	20
Ever had sexual intercourse—males	Grade 12	49
	Grade 9	28
Any truancy in past 30 days--females	Grade 12	42
	Grade 9	24
	Grade 6	16
Any truancy in past 30 days—males	Grade 12	46
	Grade 9	25
	Grade 6	19

These Minnesota statistics depict some of the concerns in children's lives. Many of our children face other emotional, physical, social and economic barriers that inhibit successful learning. What mechanisms exist to ensure that these barriers to academic success will be eliminated? School counselors are actively committed to helping learners understand that the choices they make will affect their future educational and career opportunities. Learners are constantly reminded that academic success is the key to a

productive and rewarding life. A comprehensive school-counseling program is the foundation of school success for all learners.

Guidance and counseling emerged in the 1920s for the primary purpose of assisting students with occupational selection and placement. In the 1930s an attempt was made to organize guidance in the school setting and educational, vocational and personal-social services were identified as the three main components of the counseling process. The National Defense Education Act of 1956 (NDEA) increased federal funds for education to assist the United States to regain the competitive edge in the race in space. NDEA funds were also used to increase the numbers of secondary school counselors who were required to have expertise in college admissions and the skills to support the student in resolving personal problems that might be a barrier to academic success. The intent was to increase the number of students attending college. This refocused counseling programs as available to college bound students and for those with personal problems. The expansion of the guidance provision in NDEA in the early 1960s significantly impacted school counseling programs primary emphasis be placed on individual, developmental needs, in contrast to the remedial needs and the crisis situations in students lives. Schools were encouraged to provide developmental programs at the elementary level. In the early 80s, the role of guidance counselors was more clearly established in numerous states through regulatory definitions, but not here in Minnesota. Program requirements included career development, identification of students with special needs, attendance intervention and academic counseling.

In 1997, the American School Counseling Association adopted a new definition of school counseling:

Counseling is a process of helping people by assisting them in making decisions and changing behavior. School counselors work with all students, school staff, families, and members of the community as an integral part of the education program. School counseling programs promote school success through a focus on academic achievement, prevention and intervention activities, advocacy, and social/emotional and career development.

Definition of a School Counseling Program

A comprehensive school-counseling program is developmental and systemic in nature, sequential, clearly defined, and accountable. It is jointly founded upon developmental psychology, educational philosophy and counseling methodology (ASCA, 1994). School counseling is an integral part of the total educational process. It is proactive and preventive in focus. The Minnesota School Counselors Association, 1993, compiled and produced the *Minnesota School Counselors' Model of Developmental Guidance and Counseling*. They state a comprehensive developmental guidance and counseling program is designed to meet the needs of all students by helping them to acquire competencies to meet the expectations of all their life roles. It is also preventive and pro-active. A major goal of the guidance and counseling curriculum is the attainment of outcomes and competencies by students to serve their developmental needs. These

competencies will be addressed in a sequence appropriate for each developmental stage and area. The Minnesota Model is based on assisting learners in their personal/social, educational and career development needs. The Minnesota Model and numerous other state models are based on the National Career Development Guidelines (NCDG).

The NCDG purpose was to develop a national model to strengthen and improve comprehensive, competency-based career counseling, and guidance and education programs. A decade after these competencies were developed (figure 1), more than 40 states are using these guidelines to strengthen the area of career development within their comprehensive counseling programs. The NCDG reflect professional consensus in three main areas:

1. student and adult competencies and indicators for individual growth in self-knowledge, educational and occupational exploration and career planning;
2. organizational capabilities to support competency-based career development programs; and
3. professional competencies that counselors and other staff must have to deliver an effective career development program.

The NCDG are endorsed by nine national level organizations including: National Career Development Association (NCDA), Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), American School Counselor Association (ASCA), and the American Vocational Association (AVA) Guidance Division, among others.

The school counseling program has characteristics similar to other educational programs, including a scope and sequence; student outcomes or competencies; activities and processes to assist students in achieving these outcomes; professionally credentialed personnel (Masters level); materials and resources; and accountability methods. The school counselor is not the counseling program; rather they are the integral part of a collaborative effort to serve the needs of the learner. As student advocates, counselors are committed to their role as part of the educational team. The counselor facilitates communication and establishes linkages.

Our educational system is being challenged by the changes in today's society. Some of our children attend school with emotional, physical and personal barriers to learning. However, our educational system must provide all students with the opportunity to learn, grow and develop to their fullest potential. An effective school-counseling program begins at the elementary level and continues as they move through their entire educational process. Counseling programs help ensure equal opportunity for all students to participate fully in the educational process.

Figure 1-1 National Career Development Guidelines Competencies by Area and Level *

Non scannable page from the National Career Development Guidelines Competencies

* From the National Career Development Guidelines (NCDG)

Goals/Delivery Methods of a School Counseling Program

The primary goal of the School Counseling Program is to promote and enhance student learning through three broad and interrelated areas of student development:

- **academic development**
- **career development**
- **personal/social development.**

Each of these areas includes a variety of student competencies, which in turn are comprised of knowledge, attitudes and skills which form the basis of the developmental program. The mastery of basic skills facilitates the mastery of higher-order skills in each area. Counselors use a variety of strategies, activities, delivery methods and resources to promote the desired student development. The counselor's responsibilities include the design, organization, implementation and coordination of the program.

The comprehensive school counseling program implements the following delivery methods:

- *Counseling*
  Individual
  Small group
- *Consultation*
- *Coordination*
- *Case Management*
- *Guidance Curriculum*
- *Program Evaluation and Development*
- *Program Delivery*

Benefits of School Counseling Programs

Benefits for Students:

1. Prepares students for the challenges of the 21st century through academic, career, and personal/social development.
2. Relates educational program to future success.
3. Facilitates career exploration and development.
4. Develops decision-making and problem-solving skills.
5. Assists in acquiring knowledge of self and others.
6. Enhances personal development.
7. Assists in developing effective interpersonal relationship skills.
8. Broadens knowledge of our changing world.
9. Provides advocacy for students.
10. Encourages facilitative, cooperative peer interactions.
11. Fosters resiliency factors for students.
12. Assures equitable access to educational opportunities.

Benefits for Parents:

1. Prepares children for the challenges of the 21st century through academic, career, and personal/social development.
2. Provides support for parents in advocating for their child's academic, career, and personal/social development.
3. Develops a system for their child's long-range planning and learning.
4. Increases opportunities for parent/school interactions.
5. Enables parents to access school and community resources.

Benefits for Teachers:

1. Provides an interdisciplinary team effort to address student needs and educational goals.
2. Provides skill development for teachers in classroom management, teaching effectiveness, and affective education.
3. Provides consultation to assist teachers in their guidance role.

Benefits for Administrators:

1. Integrates school counseling with the academic mission of the school.
2. Provides a program structure with specific content.
3. Assists administration to use school counselors effectively to enhance learning and development for all students.
4. Provides a means of evaluating school counseling programs.

Benefits for Boards and Departments of Education:

1. Provides rationale for implementing a comprehensive developmental counseling program in the school system.
2. Provides assurance that a quality counseling program is available to all students.
3. Demonstrates the necessity of appropriate levels of funding for implementation.
4. Supports appropriate credentialing and staffing.
5. Provides a basis for determining funding allocations for school counseling programs.
6. Furnishes program information to the community.
7. Gives ongoing information about student competencies and Standards for Excellence attained through school counseling program efforts.

Benefits for School Counselors:

1. Provides a clearly defined role and function.
2. Eliminates non-counseling functions.
3. Provides direct service to all students.
4. Provides a tool for program management and accountability.
5. Enhances the role of the school counselor as a student advocate.
6. Ensures involvement in the academic mission of the school.

Benefits for Counselor Educators:

1. Enhances collaboration between counselor education programs and public schools.
2. Provides exemplary supervision sites for school counseling internships.
3. Increases opportunities for collaborative research on school counseling program effectiveness.

Benefits for Postsecondary Institutions:

1. Enhances articulation and transition of students to postsecondary institutions.
2. Prepares students for advanced educational opportunities.
3. Motivates students to seek a wide range of substantial postsecondary options, including college.

Benefits for Student Support Personnel:

1. Provides school psychologists, social workers, and other professional student services personnel with a clearly defined role of the school counselor.
2. Clarifies areas of overlapping responsibilities.
3. Fosters a positive team approach, which enhances cooperative working relationships.

(The above information is compiled from the following resources: The National Standards for School Counseling Programs, Campbell & Dahir, 1997; National Career Development Guidelines, K-Adult Handbook, 1996).

Following is the number of school counselors reported to the Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning since 1959. Very few elementary schools have school counselors; of the 950 elementary schools, there are approximately 117 school counselors. Of the 147 middle/junior high schools, there are approximately 115 school counselors. Of the 450 secondary schools, there are approximately 690 school counselors. We have schools with no counselors and the highest ratio, known to the writer, 1:950. The American School Counselor Association recommended ratio is 1:250.

Figure 1-2
Professional School Counseling Personnel in Minnesota

Year	# Counselors	Elementary	Middle	Secondary
1959-60	326			
1960-61	411	**NO**	**DATA**	**COLLECTED**
1961-62	489			
1962-63	-			
1963-64	565			
1964-65	-			
1965-66	673			
1966-67	-			
1967-68	847			
1968-69	-			
1969-70	996			

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Year	# Counselors	Elementary	Middle	Secondary
1970-71	-			
1971-72	1026			
1972-73	-			
1973-74	1018			
1974-75	-			
1975-76	1065			
1976-77	-			
1977-78	1011			
1978-79	-			
1979-80	-			
1980-81	1027			
1981-82	1002			
1982-83	869	32	-	837
1983-84	857	29	-	828
1984-85	854	29	53	772
1985-86	854	31	54	767
1986-87	860	36	58	766
1987-88	855	34	63	758
1988-89	877	43	72	760
1989-90	861	49	70	740
1990-91	869	71	58	743
1991-92	902	84	71	751
1992-93	894	93	104	696
1993-94	901	101	117	685
1994-95	904	126	129	681
1995-96	902	155	119	645
1996-97	922	117	115	690

School counseling programs support and are compatible with GOALS 2000 (1994). The School to Work Opportunities Act (1994), the Elementary Counseling Demonstration Act (1995), the Children's Defense Fund Report (1990), the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills, (U.S. Department of Labor, 1991) and the National Career Development Guidelines (NOICC, 1989). These support school counseling and acknowledge the role of the school counselor as critical and essential to student success.

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Chapter 2

Statement of Need and Methodology

During the 1997 legislative session the concern for the shortage of K-12 licensed school counselors was brought to the attention of the state senate and house. Testimony from counseling organizations identified a shortage of licensed school counselors in the system and requested funding to support the training of individuals into the graduate level education programs. It was recommended that the Department of Children, Families & Learning conduct a study to determine the current status of the licensed school counselors. Additionally this study was to gather information on the following four issues:

- Recommend ratios and the costs of meeting these,
- Alternative strategies for collaboration to provide counseling services to pupils especially in small districts,
- Mechanisms to strengthen collaboration between school districts and local colleges and universities in providing information and experience to pupils, and
- Suggestions for meeting the needs of pupils for counseling that are focused on academic and career needs and planning.

In July 1998, a steering committee was formed of individuals involved with the issue of licensed school counselors representing a variety of organizations. (See appendix A for a listing of the steering committee members.) The steering committee met in August for an orientation, to discuss the National Standards for School Counseling Programs, and to formalize the work of the committee. A second meeting was held in early September to develop two instruments, one for licensed school counselors (See Appendix B) and one for school principals (See Appendix C) regarding the current status of career and academic counseling in their respective schools. Labels of licensed school counselors and school principals were obtained from the data management section of the department for mailing of the surveys. A second meeting was held in late September to review the draft instruments. A contractor was identified who could put the instrument onto scannable format for ease in data collection and evaluation.

The steering committee met again in October to review the surveys and discuss the use of focus groups to gather data from individuals not being surveyed. Four regional focus groups were formed and a facilitator hired to conduct them.

The survey instruments were mailed in December with a responding date of December 28, 1998. Survey responses were collected and forms scanned in February 1999. Data Systems in the Department of Children, Families & Learning ran the data through a statistical program for comparison and reporting purposes.

Results of the collected data will be reported in Chapters 3, 4, and 5.

Chapter 3

School Counselor Data

The Department of Children, Families & Learning sent out 922 survey instruments to the licensed school counselors on the current data base provided by the Personnel Licensing section. We received 505 responses for a 55% response rate.

data gathered from the counselor study shows that there are slightly more women in the profession than males. See figure 2.

Figure 2

	Frequency	Percent
Male	221	43.8
Female	277	54.9
Missing data	7	1.4

As to the employment status of the counselors, there are a greater number of individuals who are employed full time versus part time. See figure 3.

Figure 3

	Frequency	Percent
Full Time	464	91.9
Part Time	36	7.1

Half of the individuals who responded to the survey stated that they had been in the school counseling field ten years of less. See figure 4.

Figure 4

Years in Counseling	Frequency	Percent
1-3 years	89	17.6
4-10 years	161	31.9
11-15 years	66	13.1
16-20 years	56	11.1
21-25 years	54	10.7
Over 25 years	74	14.7
Missing data	5	1.0

The grade level at which the counselors serve can be found in the table below. See figure 5.

Figure 5

Grade Level	Frequency	Percent of time at that level	Average # of students served	Percent of time at level
Elementary	62	12.3	83	41.56
Middle/Junior High	215	42.6	234	63.51
Senior High	294	41.8	293	85.57

Figure 5 represents individuals who are responsible for more than one school and/or more than one grade level.

Individuals were asked the type of school setting they were responsible for. Figure 6 represents the data collected from the responses.

Figure 6

Type of setting	Number of respondents	Percentage
Public Schools	487	97.2
Non-public Schools	5	1.0
Both public and non-public	8	1.6
Other	1	.2

Question 8 asked respondents to identify the grade level of the school counselor license. Figure represents the data collected from question 8. See figure 7.

Figure 7

Area of counselor license	Number of respondents	Percentage
Elementary	18	3.6
Secondary	311	63.0
K-12	94	19.0
Elementary & Middle School	21	4.3
Secondary & Middle School	50	10.1

Again, as in previous tables individuals may have answered in more than one area thus total scores will not equal the respondents total of 505.

Question 9 asked for the student/counselor ration in their specific work setting. Numbers ranged from 58 to 999. The average ratio for all respondents is 457 students for each counselor (457/1). The most common ratio is 440 students for each counselor (440/1). The majority of respondents stated they are now seeing more students than five years ago. See figure 8.

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Figure 8

	Frequency	Percentage
# Students increased over 5 years	295	59.0
# students decreased in five years	48	9.6
Student #'s stayed the same	157	31.4

Individuals were asked to report the year in which they completed their licensed school counselor training. Responses were grouped into four categories for ease of reporting. See figure 9.

Figure 9

Year of completion	Number of respondents	Percentage
1960-1969	38	7.5
1970-1979	150	29.7
1980-1989	110	21.8
1990-1999	188	37.2
Missing data	19	3.8

Individuals were asked in an open-ended question, "For counselors to be more proficient in providing counseling that is focused on the academic, personal, and career needs of students, what would you suggest?" The following is a partial list of the suggestions:

- more time, more time, more time
- lower student/counselor ratios
- less administrative work
- college training in careers
- staffed career centers
- curriculum for in-class guidance
- updated technology demands/trends
- more funding
- more planning time
- work experience outside of education
- career education integrated in all subjects
- more crisis training
- more group work
- flexible schedules
- updated training on careers
- more support/clerical help
- more industry/college visits
- less or no supervisory duties
- less paperwork
- more computer training
- more input from parents
- knowledge of industry skills standards
- more family issues training
- have prior teaching experience

Question 13 asked: "What education, training, and experience could your district provide for students to better meet their needs for academic, career, and personal decision making?" The following is a partial list of the suggestions:

- more computer training
- study skills classes
- group counseling/interaction
- peer mediation

- require career classes
- more community involvement-curriculum
- problem solving – personal/social skills
- enriched reading class (not remedial)
- job shadowing experiences for all
- a career center
- embedded career education in all areas
- more internships
- strong vocational programs
- required career unit
- smaller student groups
- more money
- more industry/college visits
- career decision courses
- goal setting
- better student/counselor ratios
- required family issues class
- tie curriculum to the real world
- mentoring
- K-12 counseling program

When asked if their office had clerical or secretarial support 78% responded yes with 72.3% having full time 72.3 % support and 27.7% part time support. 21.8% of the respondents stated that they do not have clerical support in their offices.

When asked whether or not the number of school counselors in their particular work setting has increased or decreased over the past 10 years, 72.3% said that the number has increased and only 27.7% said that the number had decreased.

When asked, "What are some of the significant impediments in your district that impact your ability to provide optimum school counseling/career development services?" Some of the responses were:

- student/counselor ratios
- other assigned duties
- up-to-date technology
- student availability/access
- excessive paperwork
- time with administrative details
- space
- career center not central to office
- time needed for 504/iep's
- too many tests
- community attitude toward school
- facilities
- lack of time
- money/funding
- non administrative priority
- no elementary counselors
- funds for career supplies
- staff support
- increase in behavioral needs
- lack of planning time
- lack of k-12 cohesive planning
- scheduling tasks
- personal/social needs for students
- no career units in secondary

When asked, "What types of services do you think counselors should provide?" Some of the responses were:

- career planning/guidance
- personal /social counseling
- academic planning
- available career/training information

- developmental counseling
- transition – secondary/postsecondary
- post high school planning
- problem solving skills
- vocational counseling
- support for parents and teachers
- referral service
- crisis intervention
- financial aid
- individual and group counseling
- tutoring study skills
- special needs students mainstreamed
- testing programs
- interpersonal skills

When asked whether or not the district had a career center, 66.8% responded yes and 33.4% responding no. Of those who responded yes, only 23.4% said that the center was open to the public during non-school hours.

Respondents were asked to answer questions regarding how counselor-training institutions can help you provide better/more efficient services to students and what type of training and coursework they would suggest in a licensed counselor program. Some of the responses were:

- more career training/materials
- group counseling experiences
- internships
- convenient continuing education classes
- more postsecondary information
- more training with 504, IEP, ALC's
- more personal/social training
- counselor shadowing other counselors
- dealing with specific student/parent issues
- social issues training, drug/alcohol, etc.
- On-the-job-training opportunities
- engaging parents and students
- more crisis training
- on-going training
- updated training on careers
- more exposure to the world of work
- mentoring/mediation training
- computer updated training
- public relations training
- referrals, how and when
- diversity training
- education laws
- School-To-Work
- Interpersonal skills

When asked what services would they seek from the Department of Children, Families & Learning, some of the responses were:

- Less paperwork
- Supporting lower ratios
- Program examples/Best practices
- Information clearinghouse
- Labor market information
- Consultation
- Listen to the field
- Nothing, leave us alone
- Coursework design
- Less testing
- Updates of all information
- Training/updating/workshops
- Support legislative issues
- Networking opportunities
- Research and publications
- Resources
- Advocate for counselors
- Professional development issues

What percentage of time is spent in each of the following categories?

Category	% of time
Personal and Social Counseling	27.26%
Educational and Academic Counseling	27.26%
Career Development	16.25%
Non-Counseling Services	18.72%
Program Management	10.52%
Total	100% time

* The non-counseling services accounts for almost 1/5 (20%) of the the licensed school counselor takes away from direct services to students.

On the following Table, licensed school counselors responded to whether or not they performed the list of tasks and the frequency of performance. Table 1 reports this data and categorizes the tasks by area (P= Personal/Social Domain, E= Educational Domain, C= Career Domain, N= Non-guidance activity, or O= Organizational activity).

Table 1

Item	Never/rarely	Occasionally	Frequently/ Fairly often	Category/domain
Meet with students to resolve or remediate personal problems	69.3%	27.7%	3.0%	P
Working with families to resolve or remediate student personal problems or social problems	40.4%	50.4%	9.2%	P
Facilitating groups to resolve or remediate problems to increase sound decision making	22.9%	42.8%	34.3%	P
Helping parents understand student characteristics	30.3%	59.1%	10.6%	O
Making referrals for personal/social concerns related to academic/career issues to appropriate resources	39.2%	53.0%	7.8%	P
Conferring with community resources	26.5%	57.9%	15.6%	O
Working with groups on self-awareness/understanding of others	25.8%	36.0%	38.2%	P
Conducting groups on interpersonal and communication skills	24.2%	29.8%	46.0%	P
Using inventories to assess students developmental needs and maturity	10.9%	42.5%	46.7%	E, C
Coordinate peer mediation	18.4%	34.0%	47.6%	O
Facilitate a mentoring program	8.3%	24.2%	67.5%	O
Preventive counseling and development guidance issues	41.6%	45.0%	13.4%	P, E, C
Decision making skills related to self and others	51.8%	39.0%	9.2%	P, E, C
Meeting with parents on student development progress/concerns	54.3%	41.7%	4.0%	E
Serving as a staff resource in curriculum design	15.6%	44.6%	39.8%	O
Participating in a case conference (e.g., IEP, 504)	63.1%	31.1%	5.8%	E
Facilitate violence prevention programs	12.2%	33.2%	54.6%	O
Delivering developmental guidance lesson in the classroom	23.4%	44.6%	32.4%	E, C, O
Interpreting an evaluation study to others	8.9%	48.0%	43.1%	O
Assisting with orientation programs for new students	55.6%	35.9%	8.5%	E, O
Meeting with students to meet developmental needs	55.6%	36.1%	8.3%	P, E, C
Court involvement	1.4%	21.9%	76.7%	P, O
Facilitate multicultural understanding	10.7%	43.3%	46.0%	P, O
Participate in crisis teams	33.9%	52.7%	13.3%	P, O
Informing parents about school programs	53.0%	41.7%	5.2%	P, E, C, O

Note: categories do not always equal 100% due to rounding error

Key for Category/domain: P= Personal/Social domain
E= Educational domain
C= Career domain
N= Non-guidance activity
O= Organizational activities

Item	Never/rarely	Occasionally	Frequently/ Fairly often	Category/domain
Establishing entrepreneurial choices	4.9%	23.8%	71.3%	C, O
Assist students to explore educational and occupational information	58.2%	31.3%	10.5%	E, C
Helping students with career planning	58.1%	28.0%	13.9%	C
Conduct evaluation or research studies	3.2%	25.1%	71.7%	O
Working with families to resolve or remediate student educational/academic problems	57.7%	37.9%	4.4%	P, E
Interpreting test scores or student records	62.0%	31.3%	6.7%	E, C
Assist with the development of an alternative learning plan (e.g., IEP, 504)	48.0%	40.7%	11.3%	E
Write letters of recommendation for students	54.9%	19.8%	25.3%	E, C, O
Setting up youth apprenticeships/internships	2.6%	18.9%	78.5%	C
Conferring with a teacher regarding a student's learning style	35.1%	53.2%	11.7%	E
Helping teacher individualize classroom instruction	8.9%	45.7%	45.5%	E
Designing and/or conducting an in-service training program	4.0%	39.7%	56.3%	E, O
Formulating guidance and counseling goals or policies	31.5%	53.6%	14.9%	O
Instructing personnel assigned to the guidance program	17.3%	39.0%	43.7%	O
Participating in a staff meeting regarding guidance issues	42.8%	44.8%	12.3%	O
Designing and implementing new intervention programs	17.1%	55.2%	27.6%	P, O
Preparing reports of progress toward goals	14.4%	46.2%	39.4%	O
Organizing and/or conducting office record keeping	41.2%	37.0%	21.8%	O
Interpreting guidance programs to parents and community	28.9%	55.2%	16.0%	O
Supervising corridor, cafeteria, study halls, etc	28.8%	27.2%	44.0%	N
Making recommendations for student(s) leaving school	38.3%	39.1%	22.6%	E, C
Disciplining students for infraction of school rules	11.3%	25.9%	62.8%	P, N
Assisting with or supervising attendance functions/truancy	21.4%	32.7%	45.9%	N
Planning for or engaging in a school social activity/clubs	14.9%	37.0%	48.1%	N
Planning personal work schedule, reading mail, answering phones	67.5%	27.1%	54.0%	O
Performing clerical functions (e.g., recording data, ordering supplies)	35.9%	40.4%	23.7%	N

Note: categories do not always equal 100% due to rounding error

Key for Category/domain: P = Personal/Social domain
E = Educational domain
C = Career domain
N = Non-guidance activity
O = Organizational activities

Item	Never/rarely	Occasionally	Frequently/ Fairly often	Category/domain
Circulating information or arranging meetings	51.7%	39.6%	8.7%	O
Preparing bulletins and announcements	28.8%	49.0%	22.2%	O
Data entry directly resulting from scheduling	44.4%	20.5%	35.1%	N
Conducting sessions on career exploration or planning	35.2%	42.9%	21.9%	C
Coordinate School-To-Work activities	9.1%	28.1%	62.8%	C
Helping students with post-high selection(s)	57.0%	12.1%	30.9%	E, C
Working with a family to resolve or remediate student career development problems	19.0%	46.6%	34.5%	C
Coordinating a career information resource center	20.0%	24.4%	55.6%	C
Working with career portfolios	19.2%	33.6%	47.2%	C
Partnering with business and community in School-To-Work initiatives	7.5%	27.9%	64.6%	C
Communicating and making available labor market information	8.9%	34.7%	56.4%	C
Helping teachers to integrate career information into the curriculum	13.5%	47.8%	38.7%	E, C
Informing parents about career and post-secondary opportunities	32.2%	40.9%	26.9%	E, C
Filling in as a substitute principal/teacher	5.7%	32.1%	62.2%	N
Facilitate implementation of the Minnesota High Standards	29.5%	42.8%	27.7%	E
Helping students to move to the Graduation Standards	39.0%	40.6%	20.4%	E
Assisting students with developing an educational plan	54.2%	33.9%	11.9%	E
Facilitate as a resource for clubs and activities related to student academic and career success	11.0%	34.8%	54.3%	E, C
Facilitate PSEO activities	44.3%	17.2%	38.5%	E
Coordinate elementary to middle/junior high and middle/junior high to senior high transition activities	42.3%	40.3%	17.3%	E, O
Assisting students in scheduling and/or counting credits	74.8%	11.9%	13.3%	E, N
Facilitate student decision making skills related to school and post-high education	59.7%	25.4%	14.9%	E, C
Coordinate job shadowing opportunities	5.9%	23.0%	71.1%	C
Arrange on-site job tours	4.0%	15.4%	80.6%	C

Note: categories do not always equal 100% due to rounding error

Key for Category/domain: P = Personal/Social domain
E = Educational domain
C = Career domain
N = Non-guidance activity
O = Organizational activities

Item	Never/rarely	Occasionally	Frequently/ Fairly often	Category/domain
Interpreting guidance programs for school staff	17.2%	57.2%	25.7%	O
Serving on curriculum or other school committees	46.6%	42.7%	10.7%	O
Liaison with police	21.7%	49.2%	29.1%	O
Facilitate drug and alcohol prevention programs	25.1%	35.8%	42.1%	P
Manage 504 cases	28.4%	29.8%	41.7%	E, O
Budget development	8.3%	33.7%	58.0%	E, O
Meeting with parents on student academic progress	65.1%	32.1%	2.8%	E
Participate in professional development activities	37.4%	56.6%	8.1%	O
Post-secondary advising and transition activities	47.5%	19.2%	33.3%	E, C

Note: categories do not always equal 100% due to rounding error

Key for Category/domain: P = Personal/Social domain
E = Educational domain
C = Career domain
N = Non-guidance activity
O = Organizational activities

Question 26 asked the counselors to respond to social issues in young people's lives. Counselors were asked to indicate whether or not they are observing an increase in concerns in students in each category, a decrease in concern or no change in the concern. Table 2 – Counselor Assessment, Personal/Social provides the data gathered from this item. In the Appendix (D, E, and F) tables are sorted for Increase in Activity, Decrease in Activity, and No Change in Activity.

TABLE 2 - Counselor Assessment
Personal/Social

Item #	Category /Domain	Key phrase	Increase in Activity	Decrease in Activity	No Change in Activity
1	P	Drug, Alcohol and tobacco use	28.6	3.7	67.7
2	P	Chemical Dependency	35.8	4.1	60
3	P	Teen Pregnancy	61.1	15.4	23.5
4	P	Suicide	59.1	9.2	31.6
5	P	Depression	19	1	80
6	P	Stress	16.5	1	82.5
7	P	Gang activities	46.4	11.8	41.8
8	P-E	Weapons in the school	55.1	9.6	35.2
9	E	School drop-out	56	9.5	34.5
10	P	Sexually Transmitted disease	68.5	4.3	27.2
11	P-E-C	Poverty/economic hardships	43	5.3	51.6
12	P	Police and court involvement	33.9	2	64.1
13	P	Victim of violence	46.3	2.9	50.8
14	P	Eating Disorders	50.2	6.2	43.6
15	P	Sexual Abuse	66.7	2.9	30.4
16	P	Family problems	18.6	0.6	80.8
17	P-E	Neighborhood/School safety	55.8	4.8	39.4
18	P	Personal Health	63.1	5.2	31.7
19	P	Sexual assault	68.1	3.7	28.2
20	P	Hunger	70.9	9.3	19.8
21	P	Student Homelessness	63.6	7.2	29.2
22	P-E	Transportation	70.1	6.1	23.8
23	P	Student self-esteem	42.1	12.7	45.2
24	P-E	Space for Activities	52.7	13.4	33.9
25	P	Racial/ethnic conflict	47.2	8	44.8
26	E	Post-Secondary enrollment options	41.4	6.3	52.3
27	E	Remedial academic services	20.9	7	72.2
28	E	Truancy	26.4	6.7	66.9
29	E	Suspensions	46.1	7.8	50.6
30	P	Family dysfunction	19.2	0.2	80.6
31	E	Academic achievement	43.9	17.1	39
32	P	Grief and loss	56.1	0.6	43.2
33	P	Sleep disturbances	69.3	2.9	27.8
34	P	Clinically diagnosed mental health issues	34.6	1.5	63.9
35	P	Sexual orientation	65.7	1.6	32.6
36	P-E	Migrant/transient student	52.9	4.5	42.6
37	P-E	Student mobility	40.8	2.1	57.1
38	P	Bullying/teasing	44.6	6.2	49.3

Item #	Category /Domain	Key phrase	Increase in Activity	Decrease in Activity	No Change in Activity
39	P	In school behavior disruptions	35.9	9	55.1
40	P	Sexual harassment	37.4	11.3	51.3
41	P	Assaultive behaviors	47.9	8.2	43.8
42	P	Theft	56.7	4.9	38.4
43	P	Anger management issues	29.3	1.4	69.3
44	P	Student/staff conflict	58.8	8.4	32.7
45	C	Career Awareness	39.6	7	53.4

In the Appendix, tables are sorted for Increase in Activity, Decrease in Activity, and No Change in Activity. See Appendix D (ranked Increase in concern for students), Appendix E (ranked Decrease in concern for students), and Appendix F (ranked No Change in concern for students).

Recommendations

The greatest need from the perspective of the licensed school counselor is the need to lower the student/counselor ratio and the lack of funding and support for positions. The National Standards call for a 1:250 ratio and most, if not all Minnesota schools, exceed that ratio. There is a general lack of a job description and the tasks assigned to the school counselor are often non-counseling related and/or organizational functions. Students are not all that available during school hours due to class and activity scheduling so flexible hours to meet with students and/or parents during non-school hours would be valuable (this is a contract issue).

Having students develop a career development/lifework plan in the elementary grades then expanding on it during their secondary school and work experiences would support career and academic counseling. This valuable tool would follow the student from school to school.

Support for the use of funds to maintain computer programs (ISEEK, MCIS, etc.) is of great value. Additionally support staff to perform the routine scheduling and data collection is imperative .

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Chapter 4

Administrative/Principal Data

The Department of Children, Families & Learning sent out 812 survey instruments to the administrators/principals on the current data base provided by the Personnel Licensing section. We received 395 responses for a 49% response rate.

The data gathered from the administrative/principal study indicates the responses from the various configurations of school administrative/principal personnel. See figure 10.

Figure 10

Type of school	Frequency	Percent
Elementary (K-4)	23	9.8
Elementary (K-3)	13	5.5
Elementary (4-6)	14	6.0
Elementary (K-5)	67	28.5
Elementary (K-6)	118	50.2
Middle School (5-8)	18	11.8
Middle School (6-8)	44	28.9
Middle School (7-8)	46	30.3
Junior High (7-9)	44	28.9
Senior High (9-12)	105	74.5
Senior High (10-11)	12	8.5
Senior High (10-12)	23	16.3
Senior High (11-12)	1	.7
Total	528	100% (in each category)

Note: some principals are responsible for more than one type of school configuration.

The size of the districts responding for the Administrative/Principal questionnaire is found in figure 11.

Figure 11

Size/Type of District	Frequency	Percent
1 Minneapolis/St Paul	15	4.2
2 7-County Metro	94	23.8
3 Outstate 2000+	82	20.8
4 1000 – 1999	76	19.2
5 500 – 999	44	11.1
6 Less than 500	45	11.4
Missing data	39	9.9
Total	395	100

Administrators/principals were asked if they had a career center within their school or school district. See figure 12.

Figure 12

	Frequency	Percent
Yes, at the school	102	26.6%
Yes, in the district	108	28.2%
No, we have no career center	173	45.2%

It is alarming that approximately 45% of the administrators/principals surveyed do NOT have career centers within their districts.

Question 6 asked the administrators to identify what community agencies they collaborate with who assist students with academic and/or career needs and planning. The following is a partial list of the suggestions:

- Churches
- Workforce Centers
- Regional Interagency Councils
- Community Education
- Post Secondary Institutions
- School Cooperatives/ECSU's
- Private Industry Council
- Sylvan Learning Center
- Local businesses
- County agencies.
- Rotary
- Chamber of Commerce
- Police
- Vocational Cooperatives
- Children, Families & Learning
- Youth Service Bureau
- County Health Department
- Junior Achievement
- Local Industry
- School-To-Work Partnerships
- 4-H
- Wilder
- Parents
- Job service

What community agencies do you collaborate with who assist with personal and/or social concerns?

- Churches
- Police
- County social/family service agencies
- County family collaborative
- Mental health centers
- Lutheran social services
- County nurse
- YMCA/YWCA
- Neighborhood associations
- Public/private counselors
- County/State Welfare department
- Social services
- United Way
- County human service agencies
- Hospitals
- Child protection agencies
- Medical clinics
- Youth service bureau
- RSVP/Foster Grandparent
- County Human Services
- County social worker
- County health nurse

Administrators were asked, "If you do not have a licensed counselor in your district, what are the major reasons?"

- Funding
- Shared position with other school
- Past practice
- Dean of students for each level
- Small district – no funds
- ½ time social worker
- Not enough students
- Not wanted by parents
- No support at the district level
- Principal handles needs

Administrators were asked it they had a deans system: 11.8% answered yes, 88.2% answered no.

Table 3 – Administrator/Principal

Item	Service not provided	Principal/ Assistant Principal	Deans	Teacher (s)	Licensed School Counselor	Clerical	School Social Worker	School Psychologist	Other
Meet with students to resolve or remediate personal problems		320	31	254	214	23	236	153	71
Working with families to resolve or remediate student personal problems or social problems	8	296	32	191	199	9	259	161	71
Facilitating groups to resolve or remediate problems to increase sound decision making	17	160	22	119	172	3	200	78	59
Helping parents understand student characteristics	11	268	30	247	198	10	188	172	55
Making referrals for personal/social concerns related to academic/career issues to appropriate resources	21	241	26	210	208	8	182	130	40
Conferring with community resources	7	305	27	112	193	9	211	119	53
Working with groups on self-awareness/understanding of others	26	81	14	146	178	2	205	82	55
Conducting groups on interpersonal and communication skills	35	33	12	122	165	1	194	72	52
Using inventories to assess students developmental needs and maturity	51	40	9	131	150	1	93	213	25
Coordinate peer mediation	94	80	9	76	134	1	96	22	45
Facilitate a mentoring program	146	103	9	78	87	3	61	13	39
Preventive counseling and development guidance issues	58	73	16	52	212	6	141	67	27
Decision-making skills related to self and others	14	153	21	234	193	6	184	72	53
Meeting with parents on student development progress/concerns	2	304	34	290	197	4	196	172	54
Serving as a staff resource in curriculum design	17	306	17	174	94	2	29	33	48
Participating in a case conference (e.g., IEP, 504)		356	35	332	188	13	228	283	68
Facilitate violence prevention programs	40	179	22	111	135		142	34	69
Delivering developmental guidance lesson in the classroom	85	16	5	150	164	2	79	18	21

Item	Service not provided	Principal/ Assistant Principal	Deans	Teacher (s)	Licensed School Counselor	Clerical	School Social Worker	School Psychologist	Other
Interpreting an evaluation study to others	51	140	7	62	128	1	62	194	29
Assisting with orientation programs for new students	23	276	29	173	197	67	70	22	38
Meeting with students to meet developmental needs	16	150	22	209	191	4	167	119	43
Court involvement	38	277	23	40	83	3	166	29	40
Facilitate multicultural understanding	28	231	18	269	145	19	118	41	42
Participate in crisis teams	8	353	39	276	213	80	240	208	79
Informing parents about school programs	3	362	29	259	180	87	119	72	43
Establishing entrepreneurial choices	194	68	8	116	76	2	14	2	26
Assist students to explore educational and occupational information	72	71	12	228	193	6	21	9	21
Helping students with career planning	116	56	12	187	185	5	25	11	24
Conduct evaluation or research studies	142	168	10	89	88	1	22	56	16
Working with families to resolve or remediate student educational/academic problems	3	336	35	295	200	11	198	176	54
Interpreting test scores or student records		246	20	171	190	8	64	230	31
Assist with the development of an alternative learning plan (e.g., IEP, 504)		326	30	327	183	3	191	269	74
Write letters of recommendation for students	74	268	26	248	172	12	55	22	18
Setting up youth apprenticeships/internships	217	75	9	73	91	12	55	22	18
Conferring with a teacher regarding a student's learning style	8	268	16	128	172	3	96	197	47
Helping teacher individualize classroom instruction	12	299	16	145	94	2	56	115	66
Designing and/or conducting an in-service training program	18	333	19	175	95	6	65	71	68
Formulating guidance and counseling goals or policies	91	192	14	43	215	6	58	38	30

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Item	Service not provided	Principal/ Assistant Principal	Deans	Teacher (s)	Licensed School Counselor	Clerical	School Social Worker	School Psychologist	Other
Instructing personnel assigned to the guidance program	159	163	7	9	104	3	15	23	21
Participating in a staff meeting regarding guidance issues	87	253	21	144	211	12	95	74	26
Designing and implementing new intervention programs	33	265	28	184	186	4	179	134	62
Preparing reports of progress toward goals	32	193	9	214	126	24	81	70	32
Organizing and/or conducting office record keeping	4	216	11	24	109	292	24	15	16
Interpreting guidance programs to parents and community	90	166	13	50	212	13	54	44	12
Supervising corridor, cafeteria, study halls, etc	5	166	13	50	212	13	54	44	12
Making recommendations for student(s) leaving school	73	338	38	319	93	46	43	17	86
Disciplining students for infraction of school rules	5	383	41	203	30	10	31	14	27
Assisting with or supervising attendance functions/truancy	2	337	36	83	82	137	134	15	48
Planning for or engaging in a school social activity/clubs	53	239	28	252	89	33	51	14	45
Planning personal work schedule, reading mail, answering phones	18	263	25	160	136	275	101	89	31
Performing clerical functions (e.g., recording data, ordering supplies)	3	138	15	106	87	356	35	25	31
Circulating information or arranging meetings	2	338	29	163	141	209	86	55	28
Preparing bulletins and announcements	3	270	15	88	68	303	19	15	21
Data entry directly resulting form scheduling	39	133	10	19	82	301	7	6	15
Conducting sessions on career exploration or planning	120	39	9	126	179	4	22	3	23
Coordinate School-To-Work activities	164	99	6	77	88	3	5	2	44
Helping students with post-high selection(s)	202	52	8	60	145	4	15	12	14
Working with a family to resolve or remediate student career development problems	192	62	11	42	157	1	31	17	11

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Item	Service not provided	Principal/ Assistant Principal	Deans	Teacher (s)	Licensed School Counselor	Clerical	School Social Worker	School Psychologist	Other
Coordinating a career information resource center	213	62	11	42	157	1	31	17	11
Working with career portfolios	224	18	6	31	121	23	4	3	29
Partnering with business and community in School-To-Work initiatives	177	108	5	98	84	2	8	1	45
Communicating and making available labor market information	215	32	5	57	114	7	5	1	19
Helping teachers to integrate career information into the curriculum	97	136	7	86	157	4	13	4	51
Informing parents about career and post-secondary opportunities	182	69	9	43	156	7	12	6	19
Filling in as a substitute principal/teacher	64	176	27	202	78	5	27	13	51
Facilitate implementation of the Minnesota High Standards	1	348	12	265	105	19	34	25	92
Helping students to move to the Graduation Standards	3	310	22	337	140	18	42	32	59
Assisting students with developing an educational plan	41	171	19	248	182	9	69	88	38
Facilitate as a resource for clubs and activities related to student academic and career success	137	126	11	149	97	5	29	9	26
Facilitate PSEO activities	199	78	9	6	120	8	4	1	8
Coordinate elementary to middle/junior high and middle/junior high to senior high transition activities	26	286	18	169	188	10	71	21	22
Assisting students in scheduling and/or counting credits	148	143	21	57	176	42	10	4	8
Facilitate student decision making skills related to school and post-high education	151	82	15	94	174	4	24	16	14
Coordinate job shadowing opportunities	212	31	7	90	74	2	7	2	38
Arrange on-site job tours	198	43	6	102	75	8	8	3	35
Interpreting guidance programs for school staff	126	95	12	9	192	2	27	23	5
Serving on curriculum or other school committees	6	349	36	352	181	52	108	94	44

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Item	Service not provided	Principal/ Assistant Principal	Deans	Teacher (s)	Licensed School Counselor	Clerical	School Social Worker	School Psychologist	Other
Liaison with police	17	352	32	41	92	8	116	24	26
Facilitate drug and alcohol prevention programs	10	177	16	159	138	2	131	27	95
Manage 504 cases	8	207	11	131	97	2	66	56	49
Budget development	11	354	10	101	40	27	14	7	42
Meeting with parents on student academic progress	1	307	32	335	190	3	100	108	28
Participate in professional development activities	2	357	40	353	202	146	195	203	66
Post-secondary advising and transition activities	209	58	8	44	134	1	14	8	16

Note: Administrators were encouraged to fill in more than one space, marking all individuals who assisted with the various tasks.

Note should be taken to find out who is providing the services and where services are not provided.

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Recommendations

The administrators who participated in the focus groups and those who responded to the questionnaire related that the greatest two needs are funding and lack of trained personnel. To help with planning it was suggested that funding be provided to each district to develop a plan for how they will meet the needs of students in the future. Staff shortages are predicted into the next decade and there is no ready solution. A year of planning would provide districts with the ability to address staffing needs, to evaluate and establish community partners, and to seek alternative methods of meeting the needs of students for academic, career, and personal/social counseling needs.

Chapter 5

Focus Group Data

Four focus groups were held throughout the state during the months of November and December. Over 55 individuals participated in these groups. The groups were held Bemidji, Grand Rapids, Mankato, and the metro area. Parents. Students, teachers, community leaders, local business personnel, superintendents, and local government officials were invited to each of the regional groups.

Question 1

What is the role of the school counselor?

- help with graduation from high school
- plan for successful employment
- create programs and adapt to the needs of students
- advocate for child; act as surrogate parent
- help with emotional and psychological needs
- resolve conflict
- provide personal, emotional, social, educational, career counseling to students
- help with behavioral change
- take care of schedule changes
- coordinate services and train teachers (advisor/advisee system can help)
- provide "guidance and counseling" (These are the two terms that describe what counselors do in three areas - scheduling, educational planning and career planning)
- provide administrative support
- respond to the community:
    - healthy communities initiative
    - diversion
    - child protection teams
    - collaborative efforts
- link to parents

- carry out public relations for school
- consult with mental health centers (i.e., Department of Vocational Rehabilitation)
- coordinate resources/bridge groups
- select and support students who are involved in various programs
- act as mediators, problem-solvers, catalyst/change
- support classroom teachers and students
- provide classroom education
- act as a "catchall" for various demands on the school system
- provide crisis management
- act as receptionist, customer service representative, information and referral specialist
- developmental guidance
- part of a social service network along with social workers and other helping professionals
- testing, scheduling, record-keeping
- provide objective point of view. Children don't always come from an environment where they can talk about issues.
- schedule (classes, meetings, appointments, etc.)
- take leadership in preventing problems
- set up groups
- be a source of referral to other resources
- connect with other agencies and have good links. With over 20 different agencies working with the school, someone needs to stay abreast
- provide classroom education (one elementary counselor worked with 20 classrooms, ran 12 groups, and worked with individual children)
- run peer-helping organizations
- facilitate collaborations with at-risk students
- work with teachers and administrators
- provide orientations for students

Question 2

From your personal or professional perspective, what is effective about school counseling services in your district? What would make school counseling services in your district more effective?

Effective	More Effective
• consulting with teachers • liaison between school and community • intentional planning and execution of plans through post-secondary (families have less time, no experience, many choices) • disseminating information • resolving conflict – between students; between staff members; between students and staff and also conflicts others are having with administrators • peer helping/mediation programs • developmental guidance – classes • career information, general information • collaborating within and without • safe haven/parents/problem-solving • bringing in resources for groups	• career choices – center has too much stuff, too little staff • more career development • more planning/course selection • more education of parents about preparation • more training of teachers and advisors • more visible and accessible to all students (60 – 70% of student don't know who the counselor is). Perhaps better marketing could help. • more appropriate facilities – comfortable, separate from administrators • K – 12 – start early – teach social skills early • referral process – simple, clear, confidential • more reasonable expectations – lower ratios of counselors to students 1:350 is the maximum ratio that should be allowed.

Question 3

How many of you have used or received services from school counselors? What has been helpful to you - in what ways? What could have been more helpful - in what ways?

Helpful	More Helpful
• empathy • hearing concern • seeing child as special with special needs • can provide another voice when parents' voices aren't heard	• provide more follow-up not enough time • time to listen to students • students don't receive help at middle area (not in crisis/not high achievers

• actually resolving conflict • calm voice and assistance • feeling that someone cared and could resolve the situation • seeing options	• need more focus on academic counseling and tutoring • counselors need to help teachers tap into learning styles and give more info on percentage of learners that fall into certain styles of learning - help teachers apply developmental information to teaching

Question 4

How many of you have a career center in your community? What services does it provide?

- The career center was described as "the long gray file cabinet with all the information" and the MCIS program. Only 4 or 5 people knew about the career center.
- Most people didn't know about a career center; those who did said it housed the MCIS system and other resources.)
- they had a career center in their schools. Career centers in these high schools have catalogs, computers, applications, videos on careers, occupation handbooks. These centers are used by students, esp. by seniors.

Question 5

How many of you have used or received services from a career center as a parent or a student? What has been helpful to you? In what ways? What could have been more helpful? In what ways?

Helpful	More helpful
• source of information • technology is accessible • focal point for career and life planning • moves you beyond high school • not just colleges, also has vocational colleges, institutes, plus jobs • using the web/internet • pamphlets • career day in middle school • software programs	• teachers need to build use of the career center into classes • need parental involvement in choosing classes such as notifications/sign-off from parents • send class schedules home • (also see lists of "more effective") • career centers and their maintenance is not a priority • may not be attractive to use • not fun, easy, entertaining • job shadowing, hands-on, interactive career exploration is more useful • eliminate barriers to career exploration

Question 6

What types of services could be provided through collaborative arrangements between schools, community organizations, and/or school districts? Which of these collaborative arrangements are in place in your community now?

- Shared staff (corrections, social services, public schools)
- School staff and mental health
- Juvenile justice and diversion; a school/county/city effort

- "Itinerant offices" – people operate out of office – provide access to students
- Truancy intervention (corrections work with parents and students in collaboration with counselor)
- Workforce center – youth employment
- Community advisory – healthy communities project
- Student assistance teams (include all non-teaching professionals in school along with others)
- School-to-work – collaboration with employers
- Special need groups – off-site
- State programs and committees
- Health services – hospitals, public health, immunizations
- Area Learning Center (this was mentioned, but there was discussion about whether or not this was a collaborative effort, since it was part of the district already)
- District social worker – space within school
- Multi-service center within the school – school becomes community
- Church youth workers within schools
- Access to juvenile justice
- On-site social services
- Day treatment
- Community-based mentoring
- High school to elementary school mentoring
- Joint education programs with youth center
- Education in secured facility
- Upward bound program
- Career fair between school districts
- Shared services between schools – preventative, proactive - i.e. sexual harassment there is a note by this one saying "not done"
- Children's mental health (v)
- School counselor/county social worker – (done, didn't work well) –jobs are posted in both systems and paid by each

- Planning
- Home visits – newborns
- Combine superintendents and social service directors (Department of Children, Families, and Learning model locally)
- Out-of-home placement – home bound education, EBD programming (can be done – i.e. shelter program)

Question 7

What are the advantages and disadvantages of providing school counseling services and career counseling services through collaborative arrangements between schools, community organizations and/or school districts?

Bemidji

Rank	Advantage	# of votes
1.	Increases communication between agencies – decrease duplication	17
2.	Better able to address multi-faceted problems (looking at whole child)	12
3.	Community gets better understanding of the many roles of schools	9
4a.	More validity or credibility if coming from several agencies or individuals	5
4b.	More services for the amount of money (cost effective)	5
6a.	Shared staff, if on-site, provides time sharing	0
6b.	Access to money (funding)	0

Rank	Disadvantage	# of votes
1.	Huge time commitments (takes time away from kids)	16
2.	Conflict in philosophies and ways of dealing with students (bias, belief systems affect actual implementation)	12
3a.	Staff changes in agencies results in lack of continuity (multiplied when many agencies)	7
3b.	Takes different set of skills (most are trained for some of the skills necessary for effective collaboration)	7
5.	Don't always know whom to go to (not sure what role people play either in or out of the groups collaborating.)	5
6.	More complicated – adds stress	1
7.	Problems in lack of consistency – may be mere perception in meeting different goals. (When students are treated differently because they are unique, they may believe their treatment is unfair.)	0

Grand Rapids

Rank	Advantage	# of votes
1.	Extend the school day by providing positive activities during after school hours	16
2.	More resources	5
3.	Eliminate turf issues	3
4a.	Reduced duplication of effort	2
4b.	Uniform decisions and standards (synergy)	2
6a.	Shared staff, if on-site, provides time sharing	1
6b.	Positive image	1
6c.	Eliminate some transportation barriers	1

9.	Cost saving	0

Rank	Disadvantage	# of votes
1.	Structure of institutions (turf issues)	17
2.	Paper work	6
3a.	Meeting overkill (takes time to plan, to cooperate, etc.)	3
3b.	Lack of consistency in personnel (results in lack of commitment of personnel)	3
5.	Lose control of program (have to compromise)	2
6.	Travel time	1

Mankato

Rank	Advantage	# of votes
1.	Each agency used to work with same students - separately - now we can communicate	10
2a.	Dollars saved in prevention	8
2b.	Quicker response for students and resolution of problems	8
4.	Up-front work builds trust	7
5a.	Year around programming	3
5b.	Increased resources	3
7.	Birth to age 21 programming	2
8.	Children and youth know community resources	1
9.	Learning about resources available	1

Rank	Disadvantage	# of votes
1.	Collaboration can be seen as "solution" and resources diminished	17
2.	Time	11
3a.	High turnover in staff	5
3b.	Short-term focus and attention of business	5
5.	Energy in bringing together groups, especially businesses	3
6.	Up--front investment	1
7.	Agencies dropping out	0

Metro

Rank	**Advantage**	**# of votes**
1a.	Reach more students	2
1b.	Hear messages from many sources, it is reinforced	2
1c.	Allows counselors to focus on educational process	2
4a.	Provides more service to the school	0
4b.	Gets community into the school in a positive way	0
4c.	Different connections with a variety of people	0
4d.	People's individual stories make situations more real to the students	0
4e.	Bringing in people of like color and ethnic background helps tremendously	0
4f.	Once the system is in place it is definitely worth the work it takes to get it there	0

Rank	Disadvantage	# of votes
1a.	Concern about non-certified or qualification of people treating students	2
1b.	Liability issues within the school building	2
3a.	Takes time away from students for counselors and students give counselors info about school from a very unique and vital perspective (that outside groups can't).	1
3b.	Takes away the "fun stuff" for the counselors	1
5a.	Lose some control over what is being told to students	0
5b.	Training issues with volunteers has to happen and takes more time	0
5c.	Need to coordinator for volunteers that provide a "funnel" for coordination and integration	0
5d.	Bringing in more help (services and people) creates a lot of work	0
5e.	Collaborative efforts are always the first thing to go because of time constraints	0

Question 8

Is there anything else you think we should know about your experiences with academic and career counseling?

- counseling funds must be dedicated, consistent, earmarked
- mandates from the legislature must be funded
- Unless we do focus groups with teachers, parents, and students, this information is not valid.
- We need to eliminate some of the barriers to collaboration at the state level.
- Grad standards take too much time.
- The mandated 3 extra school days meant that educators and counselors lost preparation and/or in-service days.
- Collaboration needs more time.
- Counselors always are two steps behind.
- Startup projects need to provide longer funding.
- Investigate before ending programs.

- Students are experiencing many more pressures at a much earlier age.
- Reducing the ratio of students to counselors and providing more consistent funding could help counselors balance the demands of academic/career counseling with the personal/social counseling.
- "If we just handle all of these individual problems, then we'll become known as a crisis center."
- Many of the collaborative programs we have in place are in danger of losing funds.
- Legislature should mandate for counselors in all schools with outcomes, potentially statewide, K-12 (Programs can't run & be developed when you "might" get funds every year.) Ratios should also be mandated or recommended at state level.
- Need counselors at younger ages (elementary) to help in future decision making. Many patterns and attitudes are set at young (elementary) age. Should at least spend some money on pilots in elementary if won't mandate them

Recommendations

The focus groups reaction to the process was that the schools aren't using all the resources available in the communities. They recommend the schools develop partnerships with their local colleges and universities, Workforce Centers, non-profit groups, local government agencies supporting academic, career, and personal/social counseling needs, and other local groups to fulfill the need and strengthen the community.

Chapter 6

Recommendations and Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to gather information on the following four issues:

- Recommend ratios and the costs of meeting these,
- Alternative strategies for collaboration to provide counseling services to pupils especially in small districts,
- Mechanisms to strengthen collaboration between school districts and local colleges and universities in providing information and experience to pupils, and
- Suggestions for meeting the needs of pupils for counseling that are focused on academic and career needs and planning.

1. *Recommend ratios and the costs of meeting these:*

It is recommended that Minnesota follow the national recommendations on ratios of counselors to students (1:250). Although this is a standard that we should strive for, in the short term, there aren't the people available to fill vacant positions nor the funds to achieve this goal. It is recommended that a study be done in each district to ascertain the needs of the individual district looking at what currently exists within the schools, external agencies which provide career, and social and personal counseling, and electronic technology which can focus on career counseling. The legislature should appropriate money to this project over the next year. Grants for each district to develop a plan for how it will meet the need will be given on a per capita basis with smaller districts given a minimum dollar amount to establish clear guidelines and goals. The plans should be evaluated looking at the overall goals and partnerships that have been developed. Once the plans are completed, additional funds should be made available to districts to help achieve these goals.

2. *Alternative strategies for collaboration to provide counseling services to pupils especially in small districts:*

The "whole child" is of concern to the counselors and parents who were involved in the survey and focus groups. Counselors are expected to counsel students on educational development, career development, and personal and social development. This latter group, the personal and social development, is beginning to take more time as student emotional and social issues become more prevalent (e.g., increase in drug and alcohol use, teen pregnancy, increase in teen suicide, etc.).

Each district needs to evaluate what partnerships are available within their boundaries that can and do provide career and personal and social counseling. The Minnesota Workforce Centers are one example of groups that are available throughout the state and have not only the resources but also staff to provide excellent career and job-related information to students. Additionally, many community-based organizations, local health clinics, and non-profits are within communities to provide excellent services to students. The role of the counselor would be to hold regular meetings with all the collaborative partners, to share information, and use a referral method of meeting the needs of the "whole child".

Utilize the developed technology (ISEEK, MCIS, etc.) to support and strengthen the career aspect of the counseling programs. All the Minnesota Workforce Centers have electronic access to various programs that offer excellent, up-to-date career and job-related information.

Additionally evaluating the role of the school counselor and providing support staff to perform clerical tasks of class scheduling would allow the counselor to spend more time with students. Counselors should not be asked to perform tasks which do not apply to academic, career, or social and personal counseling tasks. Districts should make a concerted effort to provide counselors with alternative schedules so that individual counselors be available occasionally for appointments with students and parents after school and during the evening hours.

3. *Mechanisms to strengthen collaboration between school districts and local colleges and universities in providing information and experience to pupils:*

As part of the district plan efforts to collaborate with local higher education institutions would be included. There are 40 institutions of higher education, both public and private, scattered throughout the state and reasonably accessible to urban and rural areas. Efforts should be made to utilize the expertise of the counseling and guidance staff of these institutions in partnership with the local districts. These higher education counselors can provide academic and career counseling for students.

K-12 students should be invited to participate in career days at local higher education facilities, to tour these campuses, and to utilize the services as well as the academic programs that are available (e.g., Post Secondary Enrollment Program). Partnerships would include faculty involved in career and academic counseling offices with the local district staff.

4. *Suggestions for meeting the needs of pupils for counseling that is focused on academic and career needs and planning:*

It is recommended that a year of planning, with funds provided from the legislature, for districts to develop a plan to ensure that all collaborative partners are working together and that staffing needs are addressed. Funds would need to be made available for the year of planning with additional funds available to implement the approved plans in the following year.

Developing local government, business, non-profit organizations, community-based, and higher education partnerships.

Resources to utilize the developed technology (ISEEK, MCIS, etc.) to support and strengthen the career aspect of the counseling programs. All the Minnesota Workforce Centers have electronic access to various programs that offer excellent, up-to-date career and job-related information.

Providing students with the opportunity to develop a life work plan. This plan, developed in elementary school and expanding as the student gains opportunities to explore both career and academic areas of interest, would be an invaluable tool for the student and provide guidance for academic planning.

Appendix

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INSERT APPENDIX B AND C

Pages 52-67
Counselor survey and Administrative survey instruments

Appendix D
Counselor Assessment - Personal/Social table

#	Category /Domain	Key phrase	Increase in Activity	Decrease in Activity	No Change in Activity
20	P	Hunger	70.9	9.3	19.8
22	P-E	Transportation	70.1	6.1	23.8
33	P	Sleep disturbances	69.3	2.9	27.8
10	P	Sexually Transmitted disease	68.5	4.3	27.2
19	P	Sexual assault	68.1	3.7	28.2
15	P	Sexual Abuse	66.7	2.9	30.4
35	P	Sexual orientation	65.7	1.6	32.6
21	P	Student Homelessness	63.6	7.2	29.2
18	P	Personal Health	63.1	5.2	31.7
3	P	Teen Pregnancy	61.1	15.4	23.5
4	P	Suicide	59.1	9.2	31.6
44	P	Student/staff conflict	58.8	8.4	32.7
42	P	Theft	56.7	4.9	38.4
32	P	Grief and loss	56.1	0.6	43.2
9	E	School drop-out	56	9.5	34.5
17	P-E	Neighborhood/School safety	55.8	4.8	39.4
8	P-E	Weapons in the school	55.1	9.6	35.2
36	P-E	Migrant/transient student	52.9	4.5	42.6
24	P-E	Space for Activities	52.7	13.4	33.9
14	P	Eating Disorders	50.2	6.2	43.6
41	P	Assaulitive behaviors	47.9	8.2	43.8
25	P	Racial/ethnic conflict	47.2	8	44.8
7	P	Gang activities	46.4	11.8	41.8
13	P	Victim of violence	46.3	2.9	50.8
29	E	Suspensions	46.1	7.8	50.6
38	P	Bullying/teasing	44.6	6.2	49.3
31	E	Academic achievement	43.9	17.1	39
11	P-E-C	Poverty/economic hardships	43	5.3	51.6
23	P	Student self-esteem	42.1	12.7	45.2
26	E	Post-Secondary enrollment options	41.4	6.3	52.3
37	P-E	Student mobility	40.8	2.1	57.1
45	C	Career Awareness	39.6	7	53.4
40	P	Sexual harassment	37.4	11.3	51.3
39	P	In-school behavior disruptions	35.9	9	55.1
2	P	Chemical Dependency	35.8	4.1	60
34	P	Clinically diagnosed mental health issues	34.6	1.5	63.9
12	P	Police and court involvement	33.9	2	64.1
43	P	Anger management issues	29.3	1.4	69.3
1	P	Drug, Alcohol and Tobacco use	28.6	3.7	67.7
28	E	Truancy	26.4	6.7	66.9
27	E	Remedial academic services	20.9	7	72.2
30	P	Family dysfunction	19.2	0.2	80.6
5	P	Depression	19	1	80
16	P	Family problems	18.6	0.6	80.8
6	P	Stress	16.5	1	82.5

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Appendix E
Counselor Assessment - Personal/Social table

#	Category /Domain	Key phrase	Increase in Activity	Decrease in Activity	No Change in Activity
31	E	Academic achievement	43.9	17.1	39
3	P	Teen Pregnancy	61.1	15.4	23.5
24	P-E	Space for Activities	52.7	13.4	33.9
23	P	Student self-esteem	42.1	12.7	45.2
7	P	Gang activities	46.4	11.8	41.8
40	P	Sexual harassment	37.4	11.3	51.3
8	P-E	Weapons in the school	55.1	9.6	35.2
9	E	School drop-out	56	9.5	34.5
20	P	Hunger	70.9	9.3	19.8
4	P	Suicide	59.1	9.2	31.6
39	P	In-school behavior disruptions	35.9	9	55.1
44	P	Student/staff conflict	58.8	8.4	32.7
41	P	Assaultive behaviors	47.9	8.2	43.8
25	P	Racial/ethnic conflict	47.2	8	44.8
29	E	Suspensions	46.1	7.8	50.6
21	P	Student Homelessness	63.6	7.2	29.2
27	E	Remedial academic services	20.9	7	72.2
45	C	Career Awareness	39.6	7	53.4
28	E	Truancy	26.4	6.7	66.9
26	E	Post-Secondary enrollment options	41.4	6.3	52.3
14	P	Eating Disorders	50.2	6.2	43.6
38	P	Bullying/teasing	44.6	6.2	49.3
22	P-E	Transportation	70.1	6.1	23.8
11	P-E-C	Poverty/economic hardships	43	5.3	51.6
18	P	Personal Health	63.1	5.2	31.7
42	P	Theft	56.7	4.9	38.4
17	P-E	Neighborhood/School safety	55.8	4.8	39.4
36	P-E	Migrant/transient student	52.9	4.5	42.6
10	P	Sexually Transmitted disease	68.5	4.3	27.2
2	P	Chemical Dependency	35.8	4.1	60
1	P	Drug, Alcohol and Tobacco use	28.6	3.7	67.7
19	P	Sexual assault	68.1	3.7	28.2
13	P	Victim of violence	46.3	2.9	50.8
15	P	Sexual Abuse	66.7	2.9	30.4
33	P	Sleep disturbances	69.3	2.9	27.8
37	P-E	Student mobility	40.8	2.1	57.1
12	P	Police and court involvement	33.9	2	64.1
35	P	Sexual orientation	65.7	1.6	32.6
34	P	Clinically diagnosed mental health issues	34.6	1.5	63.9
43	P	Anger management issues	29.3	1.4	69.3
5	P	Depression	19	1	80
6	P	Stress	16.5	1	82.5
16	P	Family problems	18.6	0.6	80.8
32	P	Grief and loss	56.1	0.6	43.2
30	P	Family dysfunction	19.2	0.2	80.6

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Appendix F
Counselor Assessment - Personal/Social table

#	Category /Domain	Key phrase	Increase in Activity	Decrease in Activity	No Change in Activity
6	P	Stress	16.5	1	82.5
16	P	Family problems	18.6	0.6	80.8
30	P	Family dysfunction	19.2	0.2	80.6
5	P	Depression	19	1	80
27	E	Remedial academic services	20.9	7	72.2
43	P	Anger management issues	29.3	1.4	69.3
1	P	Drug, Alcohol and Tobacco use	28.6	3.7	67.7
28	E	Truancy	26.4	6.7	66.9
12	P	Police and court involvement	33.9	2	64.1
	P	Clinically diagnosed mental health issues	34.6	1.5	63.9
2	P	Chemical Dependency	35.8	4.1	60
37	P-E	Student mobility	40.8	2.1	57.1
39	P	In-school behavior disruptions	35.9	9	55.1
45	C	Career Awareness	39.6	7	53.4
26	E	Post-Secondary enrollment options	41.4	6.3	52.3
11	P-E-C	Poverty/economic hardships	43	5.3	51.6
40	P	Sexual harassment	37.4	11.3	51.3
13	P	Victim of violence	46.3	2.9	50.8
29	E	Suspensions	46.1	7.8	50.6
38	P	Bullying/teasing	44.6	6.2	49.3
23	P	Student self-esteem	42.1	12.7	45.2
25	P	Racial/ethnic conflict	47.2	8	44.8
41	P	Assaultive behaviors	47.9	8.2	43.8
14	P	Eating Disorders	50.2	6.2	43.6
32	P	Grief and loss	56.1	0.6	43.2
36	P-E	Migrant/transient student	52.9	4.5	42.6
7	P	Gang activities	46.4	11.8	41.8
17	P-E	Neighborhood/School safety	55.8	4.8	39.4
31	E	Academic achievement	43.9	17.1	39
42	P	Theft	56.7	4.9	38.4
8	P-E	Weapons in the school	55.1	9.6	35.2
9	E	School drop-out	56	9.5	34.5
24	P-E	Space for Activities	52.7	13.4	33.9
44	P	Student/staff conflict	58.8	8.4	32.7
35	P	Sexual orientation	65.7	1.6	32.6
18	P	Personal Health	63.1	5.2	31.7
4	P	Suicide	59.1	9.2	31.6
15	P	Sexual Abuse	66.7	2.9	30.4
21	P	Student Homelessness	63.6	7.2	29.2
19	P	Sexual assault	68.1	3.7	28.2
33	P	Sleep disturbances	69.3	2.9	27.8
10	P	Sexually Transmitted disease	68.5	4.3	27.2
22	P-E	Transportation	70.1	6.1	23.8
3	P	Teen Pregnancy	61.1	15.4	23.5
20	P	Hunger	70.9	9.3	19.8

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